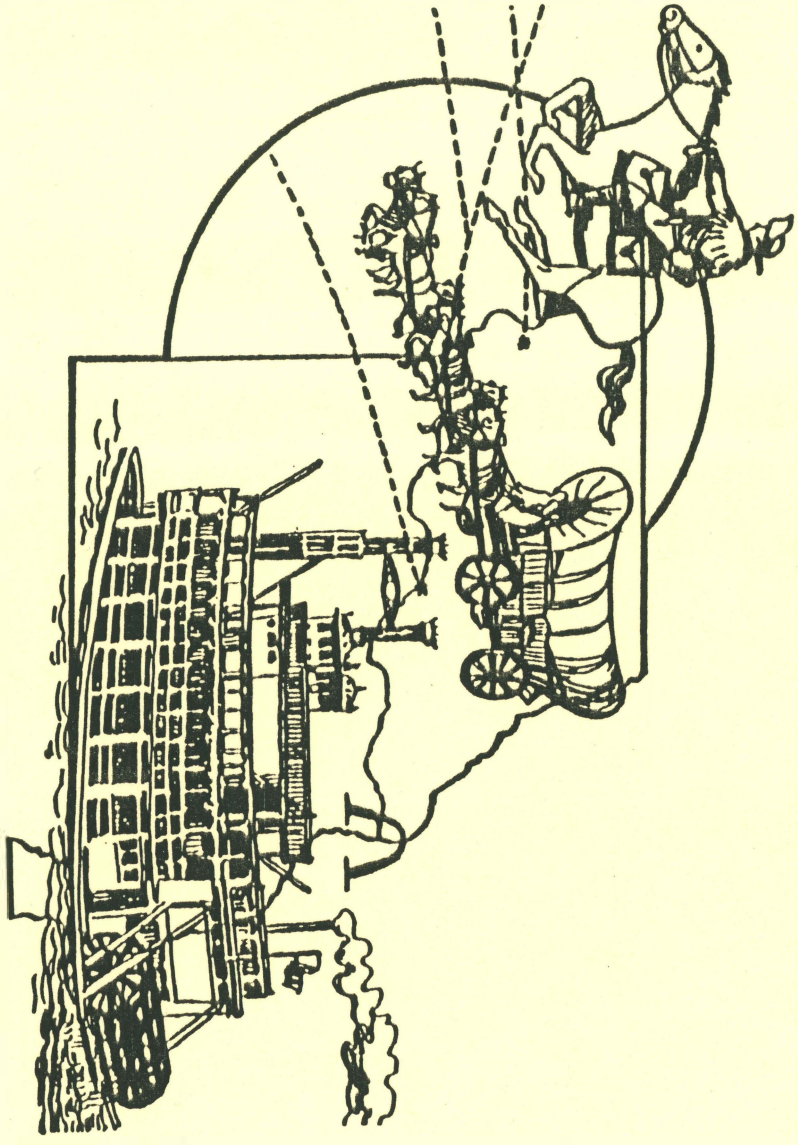
Spring, 1989



Toward the Setting Sun....

TOWARD THE SETTING SUN

The Historical Journal

of

The United Methodist Church

The Missouri Area

Volume VII, Number 2 Spring, 1989

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From the Editor;

This issue of Toward the Setting Sun completes seven years of publication of a historical journal for Methodists of all persuasions in Missouri. Nearly all the articles we have published have dealt with the United Methodist Church and its predecessor bodies, because it is within those bodies that we know more persons interested in Methodist history. We continue to say "Methodist" rather than "United Methodist", however, for we still hope that other sons and daughters of Wesley will join us in these pages.

The fall issue will begin our eighth year. I think we can safely promise that the fall issue will have a fresh new look to it. We will continue to use the same logo, but will redesign the cover. The format for the inside pages will also be new. With your help, we will have some exciting articles to share with you. At least two are in the works: an article on the New Madrid Earthquake and how it spurred church growth in the year following its shattering the calm of the Mississippi Valley. A second is on very recent history and deals with the action of the 1988 General Conference in defining the relationship among Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience.

Many of you have not paid your membership fees for this year. Please do that today by sending a check to our treasurer

Mrs. Maurine Whitworth
5528 Tennessee
St. Louis, MO, 63111

PIONEERS OF THE INDIAN MISSION

Bellefontaine Church and The Indian Missions

Wilbur M. Shankland

Indian missions have long been a living part of the work of the church. Long before old Bellefontaine Church was built, small groups of Methodists along the Bellefontaine Road from Spanish Pond on the north to St. Cyr on the south were a part of the Missouri Conference. The ordained pastors who served these people, or 'societies', as they were then called, were under the direction of a Conference and would assemble once a year to report on their labors.

The Conference of 1830 met at St. Louis and the highlight of the meeting was the appearance of two members of the Flat-head tribe from Oregon Territory, who came to ask more about the Great Spirit as told in the white man's Bible. Then and there a Conference Missionary Society was organized and missions planned. Two brothers were sent out to serve the tribes living on, or being moved to, the lands on Missouri's western borders. Thomas Johnson was ordained an elder and sent to the Shawnees. His younger brother, William, was ordained a deacon and sent to the Kaw and Kanzas. A third brother, Benjamin, whom we shall meet again later, was received on trial at that conference.

In 1830 Nathaniel Talbott (1805--1872) was serving Belle-

fontaine Methodists. Cheerful, warm-hearted, a good expository pastor, he undoubtedly carried the enthusiasm of the new missionary movement to his parish. His own heart must have been in missions, for within a few years he was sent to the Peoria Indian mission. He remained there for 24 years, teaching and Christianizing the "sun-tanned aborigines of the prairies and plains of the West", as the quaint wording of the last century called Native Americans. By 1844 so many Methodist pastors were working with the Indians that a separate Indian Mission Conference was formed and Rev. Talbott became a charter member of it.

Later, he returned to Missouri, but hardly was he at work on his circuit when the Civil War broke out and he enlisted as a Confederate chaplain. History records that the troops loved "good old Uncle Nat" because of his cheerfulness and ability to speak their language.

After "Uncle Nat" left the Bellefontaine neighborhood in 1832, the new pastor was Benjamin Johnson. Although not himself in the Indian mission, he was well informed about it because of the activities of his brothers. By 1837 his brother Thomas had become Superintendent of the Indian Mission and his reports appeared annually in the Western Christian Advocate, a church paper that appeared regularly in Methodist homes along Bellefontaine Road.

Unfortunately, Thomas became involved in the pro-slavery agitation in "bloody Kansas" and one night in 1865 was called

outside his home by marauders and shot down in cold blood on his own doorstep. He was neither the first nor the last of the Methodist Episcopal pastors to suffer a like fate, including some who served Bellefontaine Church. William Johnson had died in 1842, in the prime of his life and usefulness.

Through Rev. Benjamin Johnson, people at Bellefontaine lived close to the Indian mission work and contributed to its progress. Rev. Johnson served many pastorates in Missouri until the 1850s when the missionary spirit moved him to take up his work in the wild gold fields. Rev. Johnson's sermons and letters were well-written and as vigorous as the man himself. Large, of commanding presence, with an iron constitution that protected him in all kinds of weather and conditions, he was definitely of the stuff pioneers were made of and certainly brought a gospel of strength and vigor to the people of Bellefontaine Road.

The Bellefontaine Road pastor closely associated with the Cherokee Indians was Rev. Samuel G. Patterson, who came from Ohio to Missouri in 1834. He was assigned to the St. Louis County Circuit in 1837. He made Manchester his home and it was under his ministry that the first church building to be used exclusively by Methodists was erected in Manchester. Elsewhere in the circuit he met the faithful in union meetinghouses (such as the one in which the Bellefontaine people met), in schools, barns, and, sometimes, in private homes.

While Samuel Patterson was minister at Bellefontaine, the last sad chapter in the fate of the Cherokee nation was being written. Georgia had finally forced the removal of the Cherokees from their towns in the western part of the state, and by 1837 the forced migration of the tribes to the wilds of Oklahoma was in full swing. By 1838, caravans accompanied by detachments of United States troops had reached Missouri and were proceeding in a southwesterly direction across the state. It was a frightful journey, visited by sickness and death at every step. Some 4,000 of the 16,000 Indians died along the way of this "Trail of Tears".

Methodist ministers were deeply moved by the plight of the Indians, and none more so than Samuel Patterson. He had just moved into Meramec Circuit from Bellefontaine, and the sad procession crossed through his circuit in Pulaski County near present-day Waynesville. Patterson wrote of this event: "there was formed a Meramec Circuit Missionary Society composed of some 70 members because the Cherokees passing through here on their way to their new home have excited some to send them the Gospel." (Editor's Note: In fact, many of the Cherokee nation were already Methodists.)

Rev. Patterson himself acquired the missionary spirit and by 1840 was at work as a teacher at Okalpha Mission. His longest period of teaching was at Crawford Seminary, a mission to the Quapaw Indians opened in March of 1843 and referred to as

being in the Cherokee District, Indian Mission Conference. For ten years he and his wife, Elizabeth, served these people. Then he moved to near Springfield, Mo., where he went into the milling business. He also conducted a school known as Cave Spring Academy. When the War between the States broke out, the Pattersons moved to Fulton, Kentucky to escape the difficulties that came to those who favored the South. Fulton was his home for the rest of his life. Interestingly, his son William, born in 1838 while his father was still serving in St. Louis County, became one of the first missionaries to be sent by the M.E. Church, South, to the people of Mexico.

Shortly after Mr. Patterson left the Bellefontaine area, English-born John Monroe (1803-1873) came from Ohio to enter the ministry in Missouri. He was assigned to assist Jerome Berryman as a teacher at the Kickapoo Mission. This tribe had recently been settled on a reservation near St. Joseph, Mo., as a result of a treaty signed in St. Louis in 1832.

"Uncle Johnny", as he was called, was an experienced Indian Mission worker when he came riding circuit out on the old Bellefontaine Road in 1840. No doubt many families from the Bellefontaine neighborhood for whom the Kickapoos had been a threat in the days of the War of 1812 were interested in hearing from Rev. Monroe what was being done for their former adversaries. Rev. Monroe was one of the few pioneer Methodist missionaries who was a college graduate. He graduated from

Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio. Following his pastorate on the Bellefontaine Road, there came other assignments in central Missouri. Then, in 1848, he took up a homestead in Cooper County, where he served as a local preacher. His death was announced in 1873 just as the Annual Conference assembled.

The name of Joseph Doyle (1812-1872) recalls to mind a "switch" on the missions theme of this story. It was Mrs. Doyle who was involved with the Indian missions.

Doyle began his Bellefontaine pastorate with two young associates, Jesse Cummings and George Washington Horn, shortly after the old building was completed about 1855. In fact, the earliest preserved record of the church (1858) is written in his hand. A native of Baltimore and a convert from Catholicism Doyle came to Missouri in 1842 to take charge of a Methodist Church in St. Louis. He came to Bellefontaine in 1858. While still living in the east, Doyle had married Emmaline Gist, a member of an old Virginia family. Living in Baltimore as a young girl, she had been impressed by the preached of a great Wyandotte Indian by the name of Moneneus, himself of product of Rev. J. B. Finley's mission work in the upper Sandusky region of Ohio about the time of the Revolutionary War. The eloquence of the Indian may be said to have brought Emmaline truly to Christ and doubtless added to her commitment as a living testament to the missionary cause.

For a while both she and her daughter, Virginia, were members of Bellefontaine Church. Later some of her family moved from Virginia to the St. Louis County circuit and became faithful members at Bridgeton.

We conclude this sketch with mention of two other pastors at Bellefontaine Church who were also pioneers in the Indian mission field, Jerome C. Berryman and Wesley Browning.

Of the two, Jerome Berryman (1810-1906) was the first to enter the mission field. As early as 1828 he began preaching in southeast Missouri and in 1833 was sent as a teacher to the Kickapoo Mission school where he taught "book learnin'" and served as a counselor to the Indians. While at that mission, he was sent by Thomas Johnson, the Superintendent, on a fund-raising and teacher-recruitment tour of the East. While on this tour (in 1839) he met Wesley Browning, who had been preach ing on the Pittsburgh circuit for several years. Browning was so impressed by the needs of the mission work that he asked for a transfer to the Indian Mission work.

Meanwhile Berryman continued his work with the Kickapoos, eventually becoming superintendent for the entire mission com-plex, reaching from the Missouri border to the Red River and including all of the present states of Kansas and Oklahoma. It appeared he would spend his life in this work but, in 1846, his wife Sarah died and was buried in the Indian school cemetery. Thereafter, Berryman returned to Missouri to devote his time to preaching and to organizing and administering Methodist schools

including Arcadia Academy, Howard High School, and Bellefontaine Collegiate Institute.

It was out of such a rich background of experience that Rev. Berryman came in the fall of 1876 to live in the old parsonage beside the Bellefontaine church and took charge of the Bellefontaine circuit. This had once been one of the largest circuits outside the city of St. Louis but was now reduced to only two churches, Bellefontaine and Coldwater. At this time, Berryman was 67 years old, with 48 years of service in the Methodist ministry.

Berryman's pastorate was important to the historian, for he understood the importance of Bellefontaine to Missouri Methodism. He interviewed all the old members and gained a great deal of valuable information about the beginnings of the church. He also became interested in the life of Rev. John Clark, who had preached to settlers in the area when Louisiana was still Spanish territory. He wrote a biography of John Clark while he was at Bellefontaine. Berryman left Bellefontaine in 1880, but continued to minister in one way or another until his death in 1906 at Caledonia, Missouri.

As we have seen, Rev. Wesley Browning (1795-1888) was somewhat of a disciple of Berryman in the Indian mission work. His first assignment was to the Shawnees as principal of the Manual Labor School located in Kansas at the present site of the town of Shawnee Mission. There were remnants of other tribes in the area: Delawares, Peorias, Pottawatomies, and

Kickapoos, and the plan was to bring the children of these various tribes together at one institution. The plan went "swimmingly", as Browning later recalled, until the troubles growing out of the formation of Kansas Territory brought whites in. Then the school closed. From 1840-1844 Browning served parishes in St. Louis and St. Louis County, traveling as far west as Gasconade County (Editor's note: in those years he built, with his own hands, Wild Horse Chapel which was one of the predecessors of Bethel United Methodist Church in Pond. The old stone chapel still stands on Wild Horse Creek Road in west St. Louis County.) Later Browning was sent to the Chickasaw Nation to develop schools. In 1851 he returned to Missouri and, in the fall of 1860, was assigned to Bellefontaine Church and the Bellefontaine Circuit.

Browning was no stranger to the people of this neighborhood. As there was then no parsonage at Bellefontaine, he probably made his home near Eden Chapel where his wife's people (the Millers) were prominent landowners. Mr. James Miller had helped from Eden Chapel in 1852 and perhaps the relationship had some bearing on the building of the Bellefontaine parsonage for, when the deed for the land was signed in October of 1860, Mr. James Miller appeared as one of the trustees.

But "Father" Browning and his associate, Rev. Joseph W. Lewis, had still one more important role to play in the story of Missouri Methodism. This was to hold together Southern Methodism in north St. Louis County in the face of war and des-

truction. All through the difficult war years, these two men faithfully ministered to a church that was in disfavor and suspected of treason by the German-dominated Northern forces that controlled Missouri. However, Browning and Lewis were never interfered with in the discharge of their duties. To these two pastors may be given the credit for keeping Bellefontaine Church and the St. Louis Circuit alive at a time when the M. E. Church, South, was administratively disbanded, its Bishops fled, its records burned, and most of its ministry in the Confederate forces, serving as chaplains.

Browning was moved from Bellefontaine Church in 1869 and was succeeded by William C. Godbey, the first of the famous Godbey family to serve Bellefontaine. Browning continued to serve Bridgeton and St. Louis County until he died at a little place then quaintly called "Rinkelville", but better known to us as Wellston.

So we conclude this sketch of some of the men of courage, men of spirit, men of the Indian mission who served the forefathers of the present Bellefontaine Church.

THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND THE GREAT SCHISM

Glenn A. Baldwin

The middle decades of the nineteenth century (1840-1870) saw this nation undergoing a very testing experience. Every avenue of life was influenced: economic, social, political, and religious. The discussion was heard in private and public forums, in religious assemblies and the National Congress. The effect of the tension was to divide several religious denomi-- nations and almost divide the nation. Among the religious bodies the Methodist Episcopal Church was most deeply hurt.

The seeds for this division were sown in the opening years of colonial history. Only twelve years after the establishment of the first permanent English colony, in 1619 to be exact, a Dutch trading vessel anchored before Jamestown, Va., with a cargo of captive Negroes aboard, and these were sold into slavery in that colony. This soon became an established business. The fate of the Negro became fixed when Eli Whitney, an inventive Yankee, produced the cotton gin in 1793. The white cotton and the black man seemed to fit together and slavery became an institution to be defended in Congress and in other assemblies; from the pulpit and by scripture quotation.

In 1620, the year following the coming of the Dutch trading vessel, another ship came to the New England coast and landed at Plymouth, Massachusetts, bringing a company of

English Puritans with their conscience. These and their descendants provided the anti-slavery conscience for the north. In Methodism, the stand of Mr. Wesley on this matter and the attitude of the first two bishops make that portion of the church strongly anti-slavery.

In each section there was a division into two groups. In the north it was the New Englander who carried his attitude to a positive demand for the abolition of the slave trade and practice; and that portion of the church west of the Hudson River, also anti-slavery, but differing as to the method of handling the problem. Both the New England and the New Hampshire Conferences refused to be bound by any episcopal rules preventing the discussion of the subject in the conference session. West of the Hudson River the New York Conference refused to ordain any young man as deacon who would not promise to refrain from such discussion. In the south it was the average plantation holder who was satisfied with his holdings; and the extremist who insisted on taking slavery through Missouri to Kansas and Nebraska and on to the Pacific Coast.

By 1830 these two lines had become well defined and determined. In addition, rapidly changing world conditions, largely influenced by the Wesleyan revivals in England and the Great Awakening in North America under Jonathan Edwards and George Whitfield were demanding a revision of social attitudes and practices. The more rapid growth of the Methodist Episcopal Church was now in the north as civilization pushed west across

the Mississippi River. The north was becoming industrialized and slavery did not produce the type of labor needed for industry. Humanitarianism was growing. A world wide movement against slavery was developing. England had freed her slaves in the colonies. Russia was soon to free her serfs. In both north and south the leaders on both sides of the question were becoming more aggressive. This brings us to the fateful General Conference of 1844.

That conference met in the Green Street Church, New York City, on May 1. The general desire on both sides was to avoid any discussion of slavery for fear it might divide the church. But that desire was not to be realized. First came an appeal from the action of the Baltimore Annual Conference. Francis A. Harding of that conference had married a slave holding woman. The Annual Conference demanded a freeing of the slaves, and, on his refusal, had suspended Mr. Harding from membership. The General Conference sustained the action of the Annual Conference by a vote of 117 to 56. This was an omen of what was coming. The south saw doom in such a vote. The north was surprised at the size of the majority.

The second case to come before the General Conference was that of Bishop James O. Andrew. The circumstances were largely identical, the Bishop had married a Georgia woman who also was a slave holder. This meant the entrance of a slave holding bishop into the episcopacy. A slave holding bishop would not be acceptable in the north. The south would not accept an anti

slavery bishop if Bishop Andrew were suspended. The debate was long and able and lasted more than a week. All efforts at compromise were rejected. The south was represented by such men as Henry Bascom, William Winans, William Capers and William Smith. The northern moderates were represented by Stephen Olin Nathan Bangs, Peter Cartwright, and Charles Elliott. The extreme abolitionists had James Porter and Phineas Crandall, though it is interesting to note that the northern extremists took practically no public part in the discussion. The final action of the General Conference was a resolution asking Bishop Andrew to refrain from exercising the office of bishop until the impediment had been removed. The vote was 110 to 68 and was a practical suspension. It was not a complete suspension since the General Conference ordered that the name of Bishop Andrew should be printed with the other bishops in such publications as the Discipline and the Hymnal, and that he was to continue to receive his stipend until proper adjustment had been made. But the action did practically insure a division in the church and the General Conference proceeded to adopt a "Plan of Separation." After this decision the Conference continued in session until June 10, a full six weeks, making it the longest session of that body in the history of the church.

The historians I have read all agree that the conference was conducted on a high level, that the debate fairly represented both sides, and that the plan of separation adopted was on a Christian basis. Bishop H.M. DuBose in his life of Bishop

Soule says it was a time when the "irresistible" met the "immovable."

The delegates from the Southern Conference met following adjournment and issued a call for a Convention to be held in Louisville, Kentucky, on May 1, 1845. The convention ordered a General Conference with regularly elected delegates to meet in Petersburg, Virginia, in May of 1846. At that session the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was formally organized. And now the Methodist stream of spiritual life, which for sixty years since 1784 had been working in an expanding nation, having struck the obstacle of slavery, divided into two streams which were to run in fairly parallel lines for nearly a century In this division 459,589 members went to the South church, and they were served by 1519 travelling preachers and 3176 local preachers. Two bishops, James O. Andrew and Joshua Soule, went with the South church.

Regrettable as this is, it remains a large probability that there would have been a division another way had the vote been to retain Bishop Andrew in the effective episcopacy. The abolition movement was so strong and so positive that it not only threatened a split, it actually inaugurated it. In 1843 at Utica, New York, led by Orange Scott, Luther Lee, and others a convention organized the Wesleyan Methodist Connection. In 1844 it had fifteen travelling ministers, forty local preachers and 15,000 members. And no less an authority than Dr. James M. Buckley in his "History of American Methodism" says "nothing

was more certain than that, if Andrew as a slave holder were allowed to exercise his episcopal functions, a general secession in New England would have followed, accompanied by many withdrawals in many churches in the north and west and in some of the middle states." And where would that middle group have gone? They were not abolitionists, and yet they were anti-slavery. It would have been hard for these to have gone with either side. Clearly it may be seen these were dangerous days for Methodism.

And these were testing days for some great Christians. There were sincere men taking part in this debate. There were great Christians on both sides. There were able leaders in both ranks, men not easily swung by emotion. Today we will agree with Dr. James Porter in his book, "A Comprehensive History of Methodism" written thirty years after the event: "If the abolitionists had been brought up in the south they probably would have done as the southerners did and vice versa." Dr. Porter was a New Englander, an abolitionist, a member of the 1844 General Conference, and voted for the resolution which divided the church; and he understood humanity.

THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

We are now to follow the northern branch of the church in its course through Missouri. For the next thirty years it is a troubled stream, filled with rapids and cataracts. To change the figure of speech, for fifteen years (1845-1860) it was a cold war. Then it became a hot war (1861-1865). Then came ten years of settling down after the conflict and the accompanying task of beginning the reconstruction. This is almost a lost thirty years.

THE COLD WAR

Not very much was left of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Missouri after the 1844 division. The first Annual Conference in Missouri met in Columbia, September 24, 1845, with Bishop Soule presiding. He delivered an impassioned address favoring the South and urging the men to join that stream. On roll call each man was to answer "north" or "south" to show his preference. Ninety-five voted to follow the Bishop and gave their adherence to the south. Eleven, of German origin, voted to transfer to the Illinois Conference and continue to work with their countrymen: seven voted to go to other conferences, Iowa, Kansas, and the like. Only eight elected to remain with the Methodist Episcopal Church in Missouri. And a lonely group they were, without either episcopal supervision or presiding elder administration.

This one-sided decision gave practically all the church

property in Missouri to the South Church under the Plan of Separation and left this little band with little more than the open ranges of the state. Evidently, however, this vote did not represent the state. Rather, it was the result of the influ-ence of Bishop Soule. One writer, a Southerner by birth and tradition, writing a two volume work in defense of the south admits the sympathies in Missouri were about evenly divided. But the division of membership and property was decisive. In 1844, before the schism, the General Minutes report the member-ship of the conference at 26,225. In 1848 when the conference was reorganized the membership of the northern branch was only 1544. Two men stand out in this 1845 session of the Missouri Conference. One is Bishop Joshua Soule. He was born in Maine and reared in New England. In fact, his life work until his election to the episcopacy was spent in New England and New York. He belonged to the day when the bishop was something of an autocrat. The General Conference which first elected him to the episcopacy in 1820 also ordered that presiding elders should be elected by the Annual Conference. Whereupon Bishop-elect Soule resigned, since this infringed upon the rights of the bishop as he saw them. Later in the session the General Conference rescinded this action, but there was no way for Dr. Soule to withdraw his resignation. In 1824 he was again elected and this time accepted. His choice to go with the south did not arise so much from his sympathy with slavery, as that he believed the General Confer-

ence had no authority to pass the resolution it did, and so in reality depose the bishop it once had elected without a trial and conviction.

The other great name at this session of the conference is Anthony Bewley. Born in Tennessee, he moved first to Illinois and in 1843 to Missouri. In the roll call for decision he was not satisfied with the simple "north." His reply was "I go with the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America." This detail is mentioned not because of any evidence of bravery or bravado; but to point out the character of the man who will appear several times in the next years and who paid the supreme price of martyrdom in the end.

This Anthony Bewley called a convention of Methodist Episcopal men at his home on the Spring River near Springfield, Missouri, on December 25, 1845. Remember they had no bishop, no presiding elder. For a short time Anthony Bewley filled both these offices, not in usurpation, but by consent of his fellow ministers; since there were no superior officials named by the church. George Sly, David Thompson, and Joseph Dougherty were appointed to work in Missouri; and Thomas Norwood, J.K. West, and James Haney went to Arkansas. In St. Louis a local preacher, James Taylor, carried on the work and built the Ebenezer Church in 1846. This was the remnant and for three years these men carried on in free-lance style in Missouri and Arkansas.

THE 1848 GENERAL CONFERENCE

The north portion of the church did not react favorably to the decisions of the 1844 General Conference. The Annual Conferences rejected the constitutional amendments needed to put the Plan of Separation into effect, so that it did not become the law of the Methodist Episcopal Church. They labeled the result of that conference as secession, not separation, and elected a new group to represent them in the 1848 session, this being one sign of the repudiation. With this background, this General Conference refused to receive Dr. Lovick Pierce who came as fraternal delegate from the Southern General Conference though they would receive him personally. Dr. Pierce refused this recognition and departed, saying that the next movement toward rapprochement must come from the Methodist Episcopal Church. Right here lies the root of the misunderstanding and much of the ill will of the next years. The South Church rested their case on the Plan of Separation adopted in 1844, but rejected by the northern annual conferences. The North Church held that the plan never became operative because it was rejected. This is one of many places where honest men, good and true, find themselves on opposite sides of a situation.

But this General Conference of 1848 did one thing for Missouri Methodism. It ordered the reorganization of the conference and named Bishop Edmund S. Janes to work out that reorganization. From here on we can begin to build the history

of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Missouri.

This 1848 reorganization session met in Belleville, Illinois, on September 13, in connection with the Illinois Conference. Present from the Missouri Conference were Anthony Bewley, J.J. Buren, W. B. Evans, Nelson Horn, Wm. Crane, Abram Still. Transferred in were G.H. Robins, J.J. Crandall, Wilson Pittner, A.J. Hunt, J.H. Hopkins, and received on trial were J. N. Taylor, Mark Robison, W.J. Markham, Isaac Burns, Hezekiah Lithicum, J.B. Alderman, William Henderson, and John McKnight. Four appointments were made to Arkansas, nine to south Missouri and eight to north Missouri. The total membership of the church was 1544. There were few church buildings and fewer parsonages. Once more it is "forward march," but it is a very badly shattered force that is to go, and it is an equally shattered church and community to which it goes.

The main task of these conference men and local preachers was preaching and evangelism. The heavier administration responsibilities had not yet developed. These men went out to large circuits, not two or more churches, but to a huge slice of the state. One circuit was three hundred miles around and had twenty-seven appointments, to which seven were added during the year. THirty-four appointments and three hundred miles in travel would ;make a fair-sized Superintendent's district, even for today. Another consisted of eight counties. A third was 100 by 200 miles in extent. A fourth had the following boundaries: west by the Osage River, north by the Missouri River,

east by the Gasconade River, and no southern boundary at all. The men who traveled them preached, held revival meetings, conducted camp meetings. At practically every service the altar call was given and the men expected to see penitents kneeling at the altar. From house to house, barn to barn, out in the open under trees, to handsful of men and women, these men preached.

They were knights of the road. "Here they had no abiding place." They lived on the country. They had to be good horsemen. They needed to know how to swim, for bridges were few and swimming was necessary where there were no fords. It might rain or snow when no house was near, but on they went. Night might overtake them and they slept on the ground. They were under a compulsion. With St. Paul, "woe is me if I preach not the gospel."

They had little formal education. They believed in such education and worked hard to establish schools, both secondary and collegiate. They had three endowments. First was a very definite Christian experience. "They knew in whom they had believed." From this experience they developed certain definite convictions and practices by which they maintained that experience. Third, they knew their Bible according to the standards of the day.

Largely they were young men. Only such could meet the demands of the times. When a young preacher married he usually located. He needed a more profitable line of work to support the family. That meant a rapid turnover of men, and so names do not become prominent. Yet they accomplished results, as the following statistics reveal.

YEAR	MEMBERSHIP	TRAVELLING PREACHERS	LOCAL PREACHERS
1845	1544	26	34
1849	3591	41	61
1850	5249	51	86
1855	8190	79	114
1860	7764	85	105

They faced opposition in their work. The pro-slavery group disliked these "Methodist Abolitionists" and charged them with coming to take the Negro away from them. This opposition developed into persecution at times. Father Holland was murder ed. The Rev. William Sellers was tarred and feathered and became permanently bald as a result of the burns. The Rev. C. H. Kelly was dragged from his church in open winter and carried to Fort Madison, Iowa, where he died from exposure. J.H. Hopkins had to swim the Platte River, more of a stream then than now, in order to save his life. And in 1860 Anthony Bewley, fleeing from Texas, was followed by a self-appointed posse, captured, and returned to Texas where he was hung. More stories than these could be told. Atrocities and injustices could be related on both sides. While some ministers and some laymen of both churches participated in these acts, they were

not the deeds of the churches, but of extremists and of the rabble which seizes upon such hours to express their savage nature.

And what were these preachers paid for their work? One man said that in twenty years he had received an average of a hundred dollars a year. That was rather large. Another said his average would be about forty dollars a year. A third received a dollar and a half in six months. One was on his way to conference dressed in the only clothing he had and these were well worn and not very presentable. In curiosity he stopped at a store. He had no money to make any purchases. The woman who ran the store happened to be a person he had known in Illinois. She and her husband were glad to see a Methodist preacher. Before he left the place he had been outfitted in clothing and had five dollars in his pocket. He went on with a song of thanksgiving in his heart, ready to face anything that might come.

THE HOT WAR, 1861-1865

We now turn to the era of the Civil War or The War Between the States. The cold war has become hot. With the election of Mr. Lincoln to the presidency and the clear evidence that the expanding north would now control the Congress and the government, several southern states seceded from the Union and established the Confederate States of America. This initiated the armed conflict and the border

states, especially Missouri, suffered deeply. The South wanted to bring Missouri into the Confederacy, both for the sake of larger territory and as an avenue to Kansas and Nebraska. Normal activities in the churches were largely suspended. The marching armies and the pressure upon the state legislature to pass the acts of secession absorbed the energies on both sides.

In 1861 both the governor and the legislature were sympathetic to the southern cause. The legislature ordered the election of a convention to consider the relation of the state to the United States. That convention refused to enact any ordinance of secession, and the governor and legislature moved the seat of government to Neosho. The convention then declared the various state offices vacant, named ad interim officers, and ordered a new election.

The Annual Conference for 1861 met in the Ebenezer Church in St. Louis and appointed sixty-two preachers to their work. Only one of these remained at his post for the full year, the Rev. John McKnight of the Richland Circuit. The others fled to other states for safety.

The year 1862 found things more settled. The action of the state convention and the withdrawal of Generals Pope and Price to Kentucky and Tennessee made normal work somewhat easier. The Annual Conference met in Union Church, St. Louis, on February 26, with Bishop Simpson presiding. The whole conference took an oath of allegiance to the United States, the Provost Marshall at St. Louis administering the oath. This was

a military requirement for any who were to conduct public assemblies. Seven churches were reopened: Kansas City, Sedalia, Boonville, Lexington, Independence, Tipton, and Spring field. Cape Girardeau and Rolla were about to open. But only half as many preachers were ready for work. Union Church in St. Louis had been built by the Presbyterians at a cost of $90,000, but during the year 1862 was purchased by the Methodists for $37,500 and paid for in three years under the steady work of Rev. Henry Cox. It came to be what might be called the cathedral church for east Missouri.

In 1863 there were but thirty-two circuits and stations open to be served, and only eight of these were south of the Missouri River. A new cause of friction now arose when the Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton, issued an order giving Bishop Ames authority to seize any Methodist Episcopal Church South building that was vacant. The same authority was given to the Baptists, the Presbyterian, the Reformed, and other churches. The over-zealousness of Bishop Ames led President Lincoln to modify the order so that it included only the states that were in rebellion, and that word "rebellion" is in quotation marks. Clearly this excluded Missouri and Kentucky, and the Missouri Conference passed a resolution that commended Bishop Ames for his loyalty but declared they did not want any church building to which they were not legally entitled. Never the less, the order and the partial enforcement led to many bitter controversies. During this year, Bowling Green, DeWitt,

Mexico, Middletown, and other churches were opened.

The membership statistics of these war years were:

YEAR	MEMBERS	TRAVELLING PREACHERS	LOCAL PREACHERS
1860	7764	85	105
1861	6245	72	89
1863	2141	32	39
1864	4387	27	66
1865	7697	57	139

And in this 1865 there were only twenty-three church buildings valued at $28,020, and two parsonages, valued at $2,600.

ANOTHER BEGINNING 1865-1875

The years following the close of hostilities were still chaotic in character. It could not be otherwise after twenty years of cold and hot war, the many misunderstandings and passions aroused by such conditions. But this decade of 1865-1875 was a time of settling down, or organizing, of gaining a stable foundation upon which to build. The way had now been opened. The possibilities are now more certain. The moot question of slavery has had a legal settlement. The passions are subsiding. The churches can now begin their real work.

By 1872 the membership has grown to 12,780 with 2,380 probationers, a total of 15,160. The conference has seventy-one members and there are 114 local preachers. The number of churches has increased to 107 and they are valued at $242,250. Two years later (1874) the full membership has increased to 14,609 and 4.057 probationers, a total of 18,666. The number of churches is now 121, valued at $272,409. There are 29

parsonages valued at $19,025.

Some friction still exists, but it is more from the rabble than from the conflict of the churches. J.W. Scott, a converted pugilist appointed to the church at Rothville, was warned not to come or there would be trouble. His reply was that he would be there at 3:00 pm. A great crowd assembled and at the appointed time Scott arose and said, "I am here to preach and, if necessary, to clean out the house before I begin." No hostile move was made and some of the threateners became his best friends.

Almost immediately at the close of hostilities the desire for schools began to manifest itself. Sometimes they were called seminaries, but they were not seminaries in the sense of the word today. The first is Lewis College at Glasgow. Here Col. Lewis gave his fine home for the school and later Mrs. Eleanor Lewis and B.W. Lewis, Jr., erected a library building costing $26,000. At one time this library had 2600 volumes. In 1875 this school had five instructors, six college students, 56 preparatory students, 10 academy students. The school flourished for a few years and then closed.

In 1875 Johnson College had three instructors and thirty students. Two years later it was united with Craddock College at Quincy and soon passed from the jurisdiction of the Missouri Conference.

Other offers and attempts were made. Laddonia offered five acres of land, $5000, and 50 students, but the offer was

not accepted. Unfortunately none of these or even later attempts to establish schools of higher learning proved permanent. But much of this story belongs to the next section of this history.

During this decade the church became interested in foreign missions. John Ing went to China in 1871 and gave six years to that country and to Japan. In 1872, William A. Gladwin went to India. The church was beginning to function as a church.

The permanency of the ministry is also being realized in the frequent appearance of such names as Nathan Shumate, Samuel Huffman, J.E. Hopkins, R.J. Wilson, J.L. Coughlin. Men are remaining in the ministry and gaining a name and a record.

The most forceful episcopal personality in these years was Edward R. Ames. Positive in his convictions, energetic, and acquainted with conditions west of the Mississippi because of his years of service as Corresponding Secretary of the Missionary Society for the south and west, he became a very positive factor in laying the foundations of the church in Missouri. His zeal in enforcing the order of Secretary Stanton regarding unused Methodist Episcopal South churches was a cause of much friction, corrected only in part by the modification of the order by President Lincoln and the resolution of the Missouri Conference.

Scarcely had the cannon ceased booming when the movement for reunion began in Missouri. The conference passed a resolu-

tion in favor of healing the breach and in 1866 at Mexico a public meeting in that interest was addressed by the Rev. Dr. Vincil, representing the south church, and the Rev. Nathan Shumate, representing the north church. Of course it was abortive. The wounds were too fresh, the passions too deep. Many years were to pass before much could be done. Ten years later a delegation from the Methodist Episcopal Church visited the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church South. As a result delegations of five men from each church met at Cape May and worked out the basis of renewal of relations between the two churches. Upon the announcement of this result, the Rev. Nathan Shumate was sent as a fraternal delegate to the Annual Conference of the south church and that church responded by sending Dr. J.P. Nolan in a similar capacity. Thus began, so far as Missouri is concerned, the long journey back to unification in 1919.

THE UNITED SOCIETIES IN EARLY METHODISM

Michael S. McIntyre

The United Societies as a whole consisted of the overall membership of those properly gathered, desiring only to flee from the wrath to come. Frequently consisting of several hundred people, as in the societies of London, Newcastle, and Bristol, these groups of Methodists were a spiritual nurturing society within the Church of England.

Wesley's thoughts on the development of the Methodist societies are recorded in several places. In the "Ecclesiastical History", he cites three distinctive period of development: the Holy Club (1729), the Georgia Society (1736), and the London Society (1738).[1]

In a letter written to the editor of the London Magazine, dated December 12, 1760, Wesley wrote: "...about thirty years since, I met with a book...called The Country Parson's Advice to his Parishioners, and there read that Christian nurturing can be had "if good men of the church will unite together... disposing themselves into friendly societies," to which Wesley added, "a few gentlemen, then at Oxford, approved of and followed the advice."[2] This obviously was the beginning of the Holy Club---the forerunner to the United Societies.

The second period, the Georgia Society, was a direct result of Wesley's contact with Spangenberg and the other Moravians. Patterning the group after the "Gemeine" network of

Herrnhut, Wesley decided to organize his Savannah flock into bands. He acknowledged that this grouping was not only a means of ecclesiastical discipline, but such groups could also be a means of grace. Wesley wrote:

> Not finding, as yet, any door open for the pursuing of our main design, we considered in what manner we might be most useful to the little flock at Savannah. And we agreed, (1) to advise the more serious among them to form themselves into a sort of little society, and to meet once or twice a week, in order to reprove, instruct, and exhort one another. (2) To select out of these a smaller number for a more intimate union with each other, which might be forwarded, partly by our conversing singly with each, and partly by inviting them all together to our house; and this accordingly we determined to do every Sunday in the afternoon.[3]

Wesley did not refer to the smaller group as a band yet, but in the third period, the bands emerge as one of the distinctive features.

Upon his return to England Wesley, with several others, proceeded to form a society at the home of John Hutton. The start of the societies here was, according to Wesley, a result of his and Charles' preaching in London. People intrigued by the "strange things (brought) to their ears" searched the Scriptures and found Wesley's theology sound. Upon conversion, the new Methodists met with immediate persecutions from "neighbors, strangers, acquaintances, relations, and friends." More and more, they turned to Wesley for support and protection, so he instructed them to "strengthen you one another. Talk together as often as you can. And pray earnestly with and for one another that you may 'endure to the end and be saved'."[4]

After putting Wesley's advice into action, they once more sought him out to ask him to meet with them personally for prayer and guidance. Wesley replied that whoever wished for such leadership should submit their names and addresses to him. Once all the names were in, Wesley realized that there were simply far too many of them for him to be able to meet with them individually. So he told them, "If you will all of you come together every Thursday, in the evening, I will gladly spend some time with you in prayer and give you the best advice I can."[5] As it turned out, this began the London Society. This society, later known as the Fetter's Lane Society, had only one fundamental rule, and even it was conditional.

> There is only one condition previously required in those who desire admission into these societies----a desire 'to flee from the wrath to come, to be saved from their sins'. But, wherever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shown by its fruits. It is therefore expected of all who continue therein, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation:
>
> First, by doing no harm, by avoiding evil in every kind; especially that which is most generally practised Such is, the taking the name of God in vain; the profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work thereon, or by buying or selling; drunkenness, buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity; fighting, quarrel ing, brawling; brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing; the using many words in buying or selling; the buying or selling uncustomed goods; the giving or taking things on usury, that is, unlawful interest; uncharitable or unprofitable conversation, particularly speaking evil of Magistrates or of Ministers; doing to others as we would not they should do unto us..."[6]

Although the society had but one rule, that one rule was all inclusive!

After the Moravian models, the society was divided into bands. These bands were to number no fewer than five people, and no more than ten. In the band meetings, everyone was to speak "as freely, plainly, and concisely as he (could) the real state of his heart, with his several temptations and deliverances, since the last time of meeting." [7] Band membership was only for those who had been converted, whereas the general societies were for anyone professing the desire to follow the one rule.

Wesley was to leave quickly for a trip to Herrnhut to learn even more about the Moravians. He had had a nagging objection to the Moravian system and, in Herrnhut, his doubts were confirmed. He really felt the band leadership to be useless for eighteenth century England. In Herrnhut, Wesley learned that the system was a holdover from the Pietist reform movement of the sixteenth century; fine for sixteenth century continental people, but not very well suited for the coal miners around Bristol. He expressed his strong disapproval of the appointment of band-monitors to Fetter's Lane in a letter to James Hutton.

Naturally, in the "Rules of the Band-Societies" which Wesley wrote later that year, he changed the emphasis of the bands and pragmatically changed the Moravian model to better suit the situation of nineteenth century England. [8]

Rather than build the band around an individual (as in the Moravian model) Wesley stressed mutual confession and accountability. According to Wesley, the leader of the band was to be "some person among us", and he was to "speak his own state first, and then ask the rest in order, as many and as searching questions as may be."[9]

Several events in the following year led him to a serious questioning of bands as a normative pattern for newly formed Methodist societies. First of all, the "Quietism" affair broke out in London and was adopted by the Fetter Lane Society. This eventually led to Wesley's separation from the society and the Moravians in general. Basically, the Quietists believed that one must wait in silence for the assurance of faith and, until that assurance was given, one should abstain from the Lord's Supper or other ordinances of God. Conversely Wesley asserted that it was only by the grace of God that one possessed assurance and faith, so to abstain from vehicles of that grace prior to assurance was to sever oneself from the very means by which that assurance might be obtained.

Also, the structure of the bands presupposed an environment of outward as well as inward change which the Moravians had in Herrnhut, but the Methodists in England did not. Wesley rightly recognized that the band structure was not conducive to the very thrust of Methodism, i.e., their evangelical efforts. Bands were great for the converted, dedication people, but they left all others out in the cold.

By July of 1740 the differences reached a breaking point at Fetter Lane, and Wesley withdrew with eighteen others to the newly purchased Foundry to start another society there.[10] The break had been a long time coming and was advantageous to both sides. Wesley was now free to work with the new Methodist societies more directly and, through time, develop what was to replace the band as the normative structure of Methodist societies---the class.

The Bristol Society had been growing rapidly and by 1739 had obtained a mortgage for the building of a new meeting place "large enough to contain both the societies of Nicholas and Baldwin Streets...."[11] The cornerstone was laid on May 12, 1739, and by October Wesley was referring to the joint meeting of the societies as the "United Society", a term which would soon incorporate all Methodist societies as a whole.[12]

Once the New Room and Foundry (in London) were acquired, Wesley was free to give the new societies the kind of leadership that he had been prevented from giving at Fetter Lane. Although Wesley had a very definite kind of leadership in mind that leadership was forever changed by something that Wesley more or less stumbled into.

At a meeting of the Bristol Society on February 15, 1742, the debt for the purchase of the New Room was being discussed. Ways were being sought to pay off the debt in the most methodical manner (naturally!), when one Captain Foy proposed that each member of the society should give a penny a week until the

debt be paid. Some agreed, others pointed out that many in the society could not afford a penny a week. Foy replied that he would personally collect the penny from ten to twelve members, and any he found unable to pay, he would himself assume their share. Others offered to do the same, and it was agreed to divide the society into little classes of about twelve, with one appointed leader for each class, who would collect the weekly offerings.[13] This system seemed to be running smoothly when one of the leaders reported to Wesley that, while he was on his rounds, he had witnessed many instances of very un-Christian behavior from society members. The light his Wesley and he knew that the structure he had been looking for was this very thing! He wrote:

> This is the very thing we wanted. The Leaders are the persons who may not only receive the contributions, but also watch over the souls of their brethren.[14]

Wesley quickly instituted the division in every society. Soon, however, the structure changed yet again as another, more convenient structure was discovered. The Leaders were finding it far too time consuming and inconvenient to meet with their class members every week. So, rather than have one person go door to door around the city, it was decided that the class would come to the leader. The class would meet together once a week not only to hand in offerings, but also to offer advice, reproof and encouragement as needed. A sociological need was being met as their spirituality was being nurtured and the New Room was being paid off! Christian fellowship and love were

being cultivated in these weekly meetings.[15]

It is obvious that the classes were, in a roundabout way, accomplishing much the same things as the bands. This is not to downplay the differences between the two, for the differences were real and significant.

Bands were divided according to age, sex, and marital status; the classes were divided geographically, according to neighborhoods. One could be a society member without being a member of a band but being in a class was mandatory for society membership. Bands were less structured and mutually supportive with the leadership emerging from within. Classes were built around a particular leader and their agenda was far more structured, even to the point of being catechetic.[16]

Two important aspects of the classes emerged that would forever influence Methodism. One was that, as opposed to the bands, class members were expected to give an account of themselves. This made the meetings a process of mutual response and support----much like today's A.A. meetings.

Second, the classes were instrumental in the Methodist connectional system. Wesley oversaw and communicated with the class leaders, who in turn relayed Wesley's directives to the members of the classes. The class meeting was at once the expression of an inclusive concept of salvation in which men and women participated with freedom and responsibility, and a supportive structure for discipleship grounded in the realities and the common sense of worldly living.[17]

The significance of the class meetings was simply account able discipleship. Wesley was a loyal Anglican and believed the Anglican Church to be the closest to the early church in faith and practice. He vehemently opposed any suggestion that the Methodist Societies replace the church. He stressed that the Society was the "ecclesiola in ecclesia" (the little church within the church). The societies were formed within the church in order to call it back to its own essential faith. Members were guided in religion with the assumption that the doctrines and ordinances of the Church of England, or at least of some dissenting church were already known and accepted. The classes focused on obedient Christian discipleship and nurture, in addition to the guidance given by the larger church. "The inference is clear: the structure of the larger ecclesia must be affirmed as inherently valid and necessary if the freedom of the ecclesiola is to be exercised responsibly."[18]

The larger church gave structure, order, and the sacraments, but personal conviction and personal growth were also needed. People were being brought to Christ, but they needed a setting to nurture their new found faith. Old members had become lazy and lethargic in their faith and a renewal and rededication were needed. Classes called people to accountability.

Wesley correctly knew that these classes had to remain a structure within the church, for once they broke away from the institutional church, they would become an institution and kill

both their spontaneity and their reliance upon the Spirit. The classes were Spirit-oriented, but they were balanced by the cool Anglican rational approach to faith. The tension and balance between faith and reason were the very things that developed the responsible discipleship that Wesley sought. The Methodist Church's history proves Wesley correct, for when the tension was relieved, when the balance was broken, when the ecclesiola became the ecclesia, the original spirit of Methodism received a death blow.

The United Societies served some definite sociological needs, long before these needs were formally identified. The classes provided a sense of security in a cold, insecure world. There are three needs common to every person and the United Societies met all three: the need for inclusion---the degree of participation needed in human interaction; the need for control ---the degree of influence and power each person requires; and the need for affection---the intimacy every person longs for.[19]

The classes supplied all of these to people who were confused and hurting in a society that was rapidly changing from agrarian to industrial. Wesley recognized that Christianity is a social way of life. With the ecclesia, there is no Christianity; and without the ecclesiola, there is no responsible discipleship.

The United Societies were the very heart of Methodism and when Methodism lost them, it lost its original spirit. These classes are currently being rediscovered throughout Methodism,

and the church will benefit greatly from the rediscovery.

NOTES

1. Robert G. Tuttle, Jr., John Wesley: His Life and Theology. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978. p. 277

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5. Works, 8:250

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7. The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M. Edited by Nehemiah Curnock. London: The Epworth Press, 1909-16

8. Works, 8:272

9. Works, 8:272-273
10. Journal, 2:370

11. Ibid., 194

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid., 528

14. Works, 13:259

15. Ibid., 253

16. David Lowes Watson, The Early Methodist Class Meeting. Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1985, p. 94

17. Ibid., 122-123

18. Ibid., 127

19. Ibid., 129